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April 28 NEEDTOBREATHE Concert to Benefit Project Rescue

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Office of University Communications

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It is estimated that two million children are forced, sold, or abducted into sexual slavery every year. As part of human trafficking awareness week at Gardner-Webb University, recording artists NEEDTOBREATHE will be in concert April 28 at 8 p.m. in Paul Porter Arena. Half of the concert's ticket proceeds will benefit Project Rescue, an international ministry that rescues women and children from human trafficking and sexual slavery.

Project Rescue's ministry began in 1997 when KK Devaraj went to Mumbai, India, and, seeing the overwhelming human trafficking first hand, established a safe house for 32 girls. They have since opened 11 "Homes of Hope" in Southern Asia and Eastern European cities, while helping over 1,000 women and girls find new lives outside of sexual slavery.

Because of NEEDTOBREATHE's previous work with Project Rescue, the much-anticipated concert is planned as the culmination of a week-long awareness effort at Gardner-Webb related to human trafficking.

"This whole endeavor is student led, and students are taking leadership to fight this horrible issue that is happening in the world," said Stephanie Richey, community engagement director for Gardner-Webb. "College students being involved and bringing the issue to light can bring change."

Several events will take place during the week including guest speakers, documentary screenings, and a collection drive for Hope House in Asheville, a haven for victims of sex trafficking. "I'm excited we have somewhere fairly local to work with because this issue isn't something that is only far across the world, it is in North Carolina, and we can help," said Richey.

NEEDTOBREATHE guitarist, Bo Rinehart, spoke about the band's involvement with Project Rescue in a recent interview posted on loveinstereo.com, a website devoted to bringing "cultural influencers" together to impact social change on a global scale.

Commenting specifically on Project Rescue's efforts to release children from a life of prostitution, Rinehart said, "... it's tricky, you can't just rescue them, you can't just pull them out. It's their life; it's what they know. The hard thing is to find jobs for them and things to do once they pull them out. So Project Rescue does all of these things for them, they try to help them feel what real love is."

Project Rescue has created several programs such as the Homes of Hope to provide for the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of trafficking victims. They offer vocational training, after-school programs, night care for children whose mothers work in brothels, HIV/AIDS and medical clinics, and red-light district churches.

Fresh off a tour with Grammy Award-winner Taylor Swift, NEEDTOBREATHE hails from Charleston, S.C. The four-man band consists of brothers Bear and Bo Rinehart, Seth Bolt and Joe Stilwell. Their knack for crowd-pleasing performances has made the band one of the most sought-after live acts on tour today, recently selling out Charlotte's Ovens Auditorium. The group has charted hits on mainstream rock and pop radio, and counts among their influences U2, Wilco, Pearl Jam and Tom Petty.

Tickets for the show can be purchased through etix.com for \$20 per person, \$15 each for groups of 10 or more, and \$10 for GWU undergraduate day students. Tickets can also be purchased in the Student Activities Box Office. Ben Rector is scheduled to open the show at 8 p.m., and NEEDTOBREATHE takes the stage at 9 p.m. More information is available by calling Haley Pond at 704-406-4268.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University was founded in 1905 and is home to over 4,300 students from 37 states and 21 foreign countries.

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